



Media Release

SMU marks the opening of its new 2020 Academic Year virtually with an engaging freshmen orientation and mega CCA Fair

Singapore, 13 August 2020 (Thursday) – The Singapore Management University (SMU) welcomes its largest cohort of about 2465 freshmen to date. The 21st cohort will begin the Academic Year 20/21 from Monday, 17 August 2020.

To assimilate and orientate the incoming cohort, SMU’s Office of Student Life created “**FOMO**” (Freshmen Orientation Moves Online), an online programme which was held over four days and two sessions in July. Run by over 200 student facilitators, 30 student organisers and 20 staff trainers, the programme equipped freshmen with knowledge to navigate around the campus and key services, and created a safe, fun and encouraging environment to meet and interact with others and forge friendships. The freshmen have been enthusiastic, open and positive to all the offerings and activities conducted online and we saw very high levels of engagement evidenced by the numbers in attendance as well as by the quality of the conversations they had with each other and their facilitators.

Watch the highlights here: https://youtu.be/M_bZrMFBQxc

Close on the heels of “FOMO” is the annual **VIVACE**, SMU’s largest CCA fair with more than 150 student clubs showcasing the best of Student Life. These range from sports, performing and visual arts, community service, to entrepreneurial and international interest groups, all offering students invaluable opportunities to network and hone team-building, leadership and time-management skills. VIVACE goes “live” on 13 and 14 August featuring interviews, performances, demonstrations/try-outs, games and quizzes, and live chat sessions to help freshmen choose and sign up for their preferred CCAs.

Prof Lily Kong’s Welcome Address for Freshmen

In her welcome address, SMU President Professor Lily Kong congratulated the incoming cohort for joining SMU during this extraordinary year. She said, “To have come this far shows that you have the character and determination to succeed in a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environment. You have witnessed our readiness to adapt in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, when you experienced the first-ever virtual SMU Open House and a modified admissions process.”

Prof Kong added that the University had moved quickly to home-based learning and rapidly developed alternative ways of delivering SMU’s holistic undergraduate programme. She assured the incoming freshmen that, “We are committed to providing an education and student life experience that prepares you to make meaningful impact in a changeable world. The SMU Graduate Identities developed through our curriculum, co-curriculum and pedagogy will challenge you to think broadly and deeply, and balance thought with action to create value at home and abroad. We will work with you to develop an independent mind, and at the same time, be dependable in deeds. Be bold and adventurous; be open to new experiences; discover new facets of your character; develop new skills and fulfil your

potential. Embrace the unprecedented challenges and remember that every crisis creates opportunities. I believe that your generation will prove that it has the resilience, creativity and resourcefulness to thrive no matter what situations you may face.”

[New curriculum and courses with effect from AY2020/21](#)

Starting 17 August, the university’s 21st cohort of freshmen will pursue degree programmes in accountancy, business management, economics, information systems, law and social sciences. Through the redesigned [Core Curriculum](#), we aim to nurture distinctive identities in our graduates. Via our SMU-X offerings and Work-Study Option with selected programmes, we also enhance opportunities for real-world, hands-on work exposure and multi-disciplinary learning.

SMU undergraduates will also have the opportunity to take up new offerings introduced for the first time in the forthcoming academic year. These include:

1. **[Bachelor of Science \(Computing & Law\) degree](#)** (jointly offered by School of Information Systems and School of Law)

This new degree programme aims to produce IT and legal professionals who are adept at bridging technology and law. It will equip students with skillsets in IT & business innovation, operating IT & business innovations within a legal framework, and employing IT in legal practice.

2. **[Second Major in Financial Forensics](#)** (offered by the School of Accountancy)

This new second major will equip graduates who are interested to work in the Financial Forensics area with the critical skills to combat illegal financial activities and fraud.

3. **Exciting new SMU-X Courses**

In addition, the University continues to ramp up its offering of SMU-X courses in the new academic year, with at least 50 SMU-X courses that undergraduates across all years can choose from. The new SMU-X courses include interdisciplinary topics, such as ‘*Legal Design*’ where students are exposed to the Design Thinking methodology to redesign legal services, processes and operations, ‘*Singapore – Imagining the next 50 years*’ where students will contemplate the kind of Singapore they envision and develop strategies and policies that would be beneficial to all Singaporeans, ‘*Collaborative Software Development*’ where students experience agile software development and project management by developing a Java based web application, and ‘*Introduction to Performing Arts Management*’ where students discern, address and enhance new needs required to envision and shape the future of cultural work in the performing arts.

Given the current travel restrictions imposed by governments across the world as well as to protect our students, SMU students will work remotely in Singapore with our partner organisations on SMU-X Overseas projects. A pilot SMU-X Overseas (virtual) course on *Strategic Management of Public Issues and Campaigns* will see students creating proposals on how to manage an identified issue in Vietnam.

The University will be working with at least 60 partners across the public, private and NGO sectors to roll out the above SMU-X courses through the academic year.

4. **Work-study options**

Since last year, SMU has piloted credit-bearing work-study options, which allows students in selected programmes to take up longer internships of up to six months, while concurrently studying on campus. These include the [SMU-Google Squared Data & Analytics Programme](#) and the [Health Economics and Management Programme](#) with SingHealth.

Come January 2021, SMU will be offering a third work-study programme, the [SMU-KPMG Cyber Risk and Forensic Work Study Programme](#) which aims to assist Singaporean companies by developing talents in the fast-growing area of cyber risk and forensics; provide SMU students the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute to the digital economy; and ensure the continued competitiveness of Singapore's Infocomm manpower.

The programme consists of three courses - Forensic Accounting and Investigation (new course w.e.f. Aug 2020); Foundations of Cybersecurity (existing course offered by School of Information Systems); and Cyber Risk and Forensics Work-Study Elective (a 6-month extended internship programme at KPMG).

Scholarship and Financial Assistance Schemes Available

At SMU, we practise a 'needs-blind' admission policy where no deserving student will be deprived of an education because of financial hardship. In FY2020, we have made available a total of nearly \$8.3 million in [financial aid](#) for students, combining university resources as well as donor-supported schemes. This is a 12% increase compared to last year. Students can get access to the financial aid via the SMU Financial Grant, SMU Bursary, [SMU Access grant](#), [Work Study Grant](#), [SMU Education Loan](#), [SMU Student Computer Loan](#), as well as donor-supported bursaries, study awards and needs-based scholarships.

With **297 scholarships and bursaries** that freshmen can apply for in the new academic year, one in three freshmen of the new intake will stand a chance to receive a scholarship or award by the University. Some of these give preference to students with financial needs, and all of them are bond-free.

Additionally, tuition fee financing schemes – in the form of the Tuition Fee Loan and Study Loan (both supported by the government), as well as the CPF Education Loan, are available for students, the former two being interest-free during the course of their study. SMU also offers student employment opportunities, such as the Work Study Grant, to help students seek part-time employment on-campus and off-campus for additional income. Currently, about 126 students are working with offices in the University.

The University is committed to delivering a high-quality SMU education that will develop our students into confident, well-rounded young men and women, who are capable of being trusted leaders and responsible global citizens, and whose contributions will make meaningful impact in Singapore and beyond.

About Singapore Management University

A premier university in Asia, the Singapore Management University (SMU) is internationally recognised for its world-class research and distinguished teaching. Established in 2000, SMU's mission is to generate leading-edge research with global impact and to produce broad-based, creative and entrepreneurial leaders for the knowledge-based economy. SMU's

education is known for its highly interactive, collaborative and project-based approach to learning

Home to over 10,000 students across undergraduate, postgraduate professional and post-graduate research programmes, SMU, is comprised of six schools: School of Accountancy, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, School of Economics, School of Information Systems, School of Law, and School of Social Sciences. SMU offers a wide range of bachelors', masters' and PhD degree programmes in the disciplinary areas associated with the six schools, as well as in multidisciplinary combinations of these areas.

SMU emphasises rigorous, high-impact, multi- and interdisciplinary research that addresses Asian issues of global relevance. SMU faculty members collaborate with leading international researchers and universities around the world, as well as with partners in the business community and public sector. SMU's city campus is a modern facility located in the heart of downtown Singapore, fostering strategic linkages with business, government and the wider community.

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